

**OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL
THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO**

JONATHAN E. COUGHLAN, Disciplinary Counsel

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INSTRUCTIONS

The Office of Disciplinary Counsel investigates allegations of ethical misconduct against attorneys and judges. Disciplinary Counsel also investigates grievances regarding the unauthorized practice of law. Please understand that this office has no jurisdiction over and will not become involved in the legal merits of any case. The attorney disciplinary process will not affect or change court decisions made in your case. In addition, Disciplinary Counsel may not give you legal advice.

This form will assist you in filing your grievance. After you **have legibly completed the form and signed and dated the form**, please return it in the envelope provided. You may attach additional sheets of paper, if necessary, in order to complete the "Facts of the Grievance" portion of the form. If you wish to file a grievance against more than one attorney or judge, please use one form per attorney or judge. You may make additional copies of the form. You may enclose all forms in one envelope.

If you include documentation with your grievance, send **copies only**. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS.**

The Rules of the Supreme Court of Ohio require that investigations be confidential. You are requested to keep confidential the fact that you are submitting this grievance. Only the attorney or judge you are filing your grievance against may waive confidentiality. In filing a grievance against your attorney, you are waiving your attorney/client privilege.

The attorney or judge, you are filing your grievance against will receive notice of your grievance. Those individuals are also entitled to receive a copy of your grievance and **may** be asked to respond to your allegations. Your grievance may result in your attorney withdrawing from your case. Disciplinary Counsel cannot prevent an attorney from withdrawing from representation.

Once received, it may take up to sixty (60) days for us to review and respond to your grievance. However, our office will notify you of the disposition of your grievance by mail within that time period. You may or may not be contacted by mail or telephone to provide additional information.

The Grievance Process

A grievance sent to the Disciplinary Counsel of the Supreme Court of Ohio or to a local bar association's certified grievance committee will be reviewed to determine whether the grievance alleges a violation of the Code of Professional Responsibility or Code of Judicial Conduct. If there is evidence that supports the allegation of a violation, the grievance will be investigated. Following the investigation, if substantial, credible evidence is found that a violation has occurred, a formal complaint will be filed with the Board of Commissioners on Grievances and Discipline. A three-member panel of the Board will review the complaint and determine whether probable cause exists to certify it. If the complaint is certified by the Board, a hearing is then held before a different three-member panel of the Board. The panel considers the evidence and makes a recommendation to the full Board of Commissioners. The full Board then makes a recommendation to the Supreme Court of Ohio. The Court has final say on whether to discipline an attorney or judge and what sanction should be administered. A grievance is confidential until the Board certifies it as a formal complaint. A grievance or complaint can be dismissed at any point in the process.

Grievance Form

YOUR NAME: _____
 Last **First** **MI** **Phone No.**

ADDRESS: _____
 Street

City **County** **State** **Zip Code**

(Please circle) **ATTORNEY or JUDGE**

NAME: _____
 Last **First** **MI** **Phone No.**

ADDRESS: _____
 Street

City **County** **State** **Zip Code**

GRIEVANCE FILED WITH OTHER AGENCIES:

Have you filed this grievance with any other agency or bar association? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, name of that agency: _____

When filed?: _____

What happened?: _____

COURT ACTION:

Does this grievance involve a case that is still pending before a court? _____ Yes _____ No

Have you brought civil or criminal court action against this attorney or judge? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, name of that court: _____

Result of court action: _____

Name, address, and phone number of attorney currently representing you, if different than above:

WITNESSES:

List the name, address, and daytime telephone number of persons who can provide information, IF NECESSARY, in support of your grievance.

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE NO.
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_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

FACTS OF THE GRIEVANCE

Briefly explain the facts of your grievance in chronological order, including dates. Include a description of the illegal or unethical conduct committed by this legal professional. Attach **COPIES** (DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS) of any correspondence and documents that support your grievance.

[illegible]

The Rules of the Supreme Court of Ohio require that investigations be confidential. Please keep confidential the fact that you are submitting this grievance. The party(ies) you are filing your grievance against will receive notice of your grievance and may receive a copy of your grievance and be asked to respond to your allegations.

Signature

Date